their chateaux, and the peasants again dance in the woods on Sunday evenings.

During my present state of uncertainty as to the future, I employ myself in answering all the letters from my agents and the prisoners, every other day, by the same post that brings them. They never had so punctual a correspondent in their lives. The De Mauldes now and then act as my French secretaries, to order clothes for the prisoners, or argue upon the value of their worsted stockings.

May 12th, 1797.

I can give no guess when you have heard from me, or whether this will ever reach you; but what I have to write is of so little conse-quence, that it matters little what becomes of it. My life here is perfectly rural and uniform. The De Mauldes sing and play in the evening. We live comfortably. I walk a great deal in the morning, and have some hours' employment in writing letters and overhauling accounts. The weather is wet and boisterous, but as this sandy

soil is dry in a minute, the rain of many hours is no impediment to our excursions the first fair moment.